

Allison Kong

The “whore-ific” truth

By Sabrina Ketel
Staff Writer

A man saunters into a club—a bar, a dance floor, the setting is irrelevant—and immediately, his presence causes a stir. We know his type, run the murmurs around the room. By the end of the night, he's flirted with half the women in the room and kissed more than a few. He is applauded by his friends; cheered on by those watching from the sidelines. The women don't much mind his behavior—he's a catch. In the eyes of society, this man is deserving of praise and perhaps a few conspiratorial winks.

Now consider the woman who enters that same club; walks in to the suspense of eyes following the swish of her skirt or the click of her heels. Imagine that by the end of the night, she has cast glances at many of the men in the room, and perhaps kissed a couple. The women seethe with anger, skin tinged green with envy. Still, whether the cause lies in jealousy or elsewhere, whispers are soon circling the room. Oh, she's easy, laugh men watching the scene; she's a slut, vicious bystanders add with a condescending toss of the head.

Were these stories set in separate contexts, and not placed side by side, it would be difficult for much of the modern world to see what is—hopefully—now an obvious problem. The idea that a man and a woman can walk into the same room, behave identically, and yet receive such drastically different reactions from the crowd is frankly insulting. And yet it occurs with startling regularity.

True, it is possible that the competitive and

sometimes spiteful nature of women may be a factor in the judgment of a flirtatious woman, but when it all comes down to it, they're simply following an instinctively premeditated rule—men are allowed to play more than one card, women are not.

So how is this scenario in any way fair? This is the twenty-first century. Society makes grand claims: women and men are equal, racism doesn't exist anymore, only the ignorant have stereotypes—the list goes on and on. By all rights, sexism should be a thing of the past.

Needless to say, it's apparent that it's not. Maybe it's time for society to take a step back and reevaluate. Because while much of America believes blindly in the idealistic thought that the modern world is perfect—that such issues as freedom and liberty and the pursuit of happiness were taken care of over two hundred years ago with the signing of an admittedly important piece of paper—this sexist “rule” is really just one of the many old-fashioned concepts that lives happily on through cultural acceptance.

Although this offhand discrimination seems like a small thing, a simple judgment, one has to see that it could lead to much larger stereotypes. If men are allowed to flirt with more than one woman, why not bring polygamy out from under the rug? If women can only kiss one man at a time, maybe divorce should be thrown back into the closet.

People in large numbers are capable of stupid things, and society's views so easily become our own. Maybe it's time for everyone to just embrace their inner slut.

By Elaine Ejigu
Staff Writer

The war on weight: danger to our health

In today's society, health is an obsession. All of a sudden, foods have fewer calories, less fat, less sodium, no high fructose corn syrup. Dieting, weight loss supplements, and weight loss surgery are at an all time high.

It seems that people are desperate to lose weight to look good more than for their own physical health. The media is ruthless in peddling it's image of beauty—something that always amounts to thin. Television is bombarded by cheesy and painful—to sit—through commercials advertising surgery clinics, weight loss pills, and exercise machines.

Naturally, this makes people want to be skinny. And with the recent research on America's obesity epidemic, who could blame them? Yet, some people of larger sizes feel offended by America's obsession with getting thin. Some claim that there are health benefits of being overweight. These are people that claim to feel beautiful just the way they are.

But research shows that excess fat leads to almost all chronic diseases, according to the UCLA Medical Center. This explains why several states have joined the Prevention of Child Obesity Act (2004). That is the reason why soda was banned from the high school, and all chocolate or otherwise ‘fattening’

items mysteriously disappeared from the vending machines.

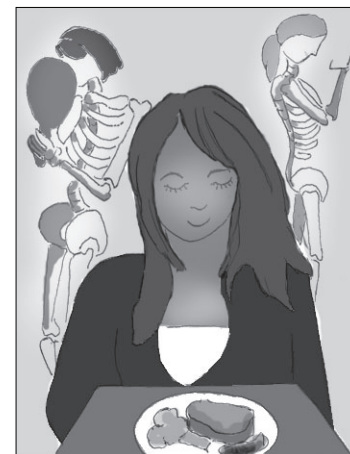
Students often complain about P.E. and the lack of junk food here at SPHS. But this country truly needs these things. Exercise and healthy food lead to weight loss, which equals a longer life no matter how one spins it.

Nevertheless, the dangers of obesity and America's excess of it are no excuse for the ridiculous glorification of being skinny. Not all people were born to be one hundred pounds. And just as people come in all different heights, they come in all different sizes too. Having a large build doesn't necessarily make one unhealthy.

With all the hype about physical appearance one can't help but wonder if it is the source of mental illnesses like anorexia and bulimia. Once can't help but wonder if inner beauty counts for anything anymore.

All of this puts tremendous pressure on youth today. People with extra fat aren't necessarily sloppy eaters or couch potatoes. Genes factor in on a person's shape too. It just isn't fair that some people are born with what are basically considered better genes than others.

At the end of the day it's not okay to be pressured into losing weight for superficial reasons. But on a larger scale, being average weight has life long benefits. Embrace the weight loss craze as a tool for bettering life, but beware of that pesky desire to look a certain way.



Allison Kong

Anime is our soul

The anime obsession is a misrepresentation of Japanese culture

By Jackie Lee
Staff Writer

In 1958, Japanese animation studio Toei produced the first color anime film, *The Tale of the White Serpent*. Toei Animation created an idyllic tale of love that was inspired by Western animation, specifically Walt Disney, while at the same time maintaining a distinct Oriental style. But all that charm diminished as the world entered the 1990s. The popularity of anime is gaining momentum as an annoying trend and nothing more.

A girl sees a skinny girl in *Vogue* and becomes bulimic to replicate the same sort of unhealthy thinness. This is not unlike an obsession another girl might develop after watching anime. At anime events, one can see the burgeoning, sickening popularity of anime. Every

year at Anime Expo, thousands of Americans gather, dressed in costumes and attempt to act like anime characters. Although it's not very different from American comic book conventions, there is one noticeable difference: the death of a culture.

According to the unwritten rules of anime culture as shaped by the current American generation, you're a cool kid if you squint your eyes, and describe things as “kawaii” or “sugoi” even if you have absolutely no idea what they mean. Japanese vernacular is complex and difficult, just as American English is to immigrants. People can't learn Japanese or replicate their mannerisms by watching anime with subtitles.

Americans see samurai as honorable fighters who can kick butt, but there are more complex customs beyond bushi-

do. Samurai are cool and always get the hot Japanese chick in the end, right? Wrong. Samurai engaged in a sacred tradition known as *shudo*, in which a veteran samurai engages in a pederastic relationship with a young boy. This was beneficial to the younger because it taught him discipline and virtue. Most American anime fans are stunned by this revelation. It illustrates the ignorance of basing their obsession of the Japanese culture on what they want to believe rather than what is true.

Anime is also taking over the American music industry. The music video of Kanye West's popular song “Stronger” subtly references the anime *Akira*, featuring similar lighting effects, motorcycles, and hospital scenes. During the music video, Japanese hiragana flashes—

they're completely random. But at least they *look* good.

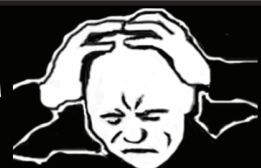
There are redeeming qualities of the blend of the West and the East. Clint Eastwood's 2006 film, *Letters from Iwo Jima*, told from the perspective of the Japanese soldiers during World War II, is a touching, mesmerizing tale of honor and the horrors of war, and it received four Academy Award nominations and was nearly universally praised as the best film of the year.

The popularity of Japanese anime in America was born out of ignorance and lack of understanding, but this mix isn't entirely horrible. There just needs to be respect and appreciation, just how everyone should approach foreign cultures. Otherwise, indulging in any foreign culture—not just Japanese—is insulting.



Allison Kong

The Monthly RANT



Bad driving chaos

Haley Muhlestein

By Alex Sato
Staff Writer

Adolescents across the world have always shared a single, universal longing: freedom from their parents. Thus, the reception of a driver's license is celebrated by countless teens.

I would know. My first solo-drive felt like a sigh of relief. “Wow...” I thought, “I've got my license!” Though short, that first trip home was one of unforgettable euphoria.

That is, of course, until I hit the first intersection.

“What?” You may ask, “Why the sudden depression?” You're probably giddy in suspense.

Well, before I crossed and was hit harder than the Raiders' offensive line, I noticed a second car quickly tailing the first that had passed. I slammed on the breaks and watched an elderly man in an equally aged Buick drive off. At that moment, I had a borderline religious epiphany.

Far too many drivers are stupid. Really stupid. Scarily stupid. I refer here to the mentally challenged motorists who open their driver's seat door a bit too quickly—into on-

coming traffic. Not only is the door itself left at the mercy of my Honda minivan's thousand horses, but said horses don't take a car door to the face very well. At least not at 30 mph.

Luckily, the population at large seems to achieve moving the wheel a few degrees, waiting, and then moving it back, with relative ease. But despite this inherent simplicity, an enraging percent of drivers just can't seem to get it right. Their mistakes cause horn-honks, tire skids, and collisions. How could a mere twitch of the muscles be so badly erred?

Signaling. Good gravy-over-turkey-and-rice, why can't you people get this down?

If you are turning, shifting lanes, or changing direction in any way, you need to signal.

The little switch isn't even more than two inches from the wheel. Trust me on this one, I'd know. I've measured it. Don't judge.

And take note: you don't even have to turn the signal back off. Your car can do that one for you, on the house. With this kind of convenience and the tip of your finger, how can't you take advantage? I have no clue. But please—I beg of you—don't be a stupid driver, and thank you all so much for taking the time to read this. Except for those of you who don't signal. Your time will come.